

# SPECULATIVE TRIBUNE #3

72 E. Randolph Street, Chicago IL

Tuesday, October 13, 2015



## EDITORIAL

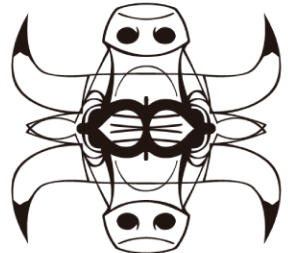
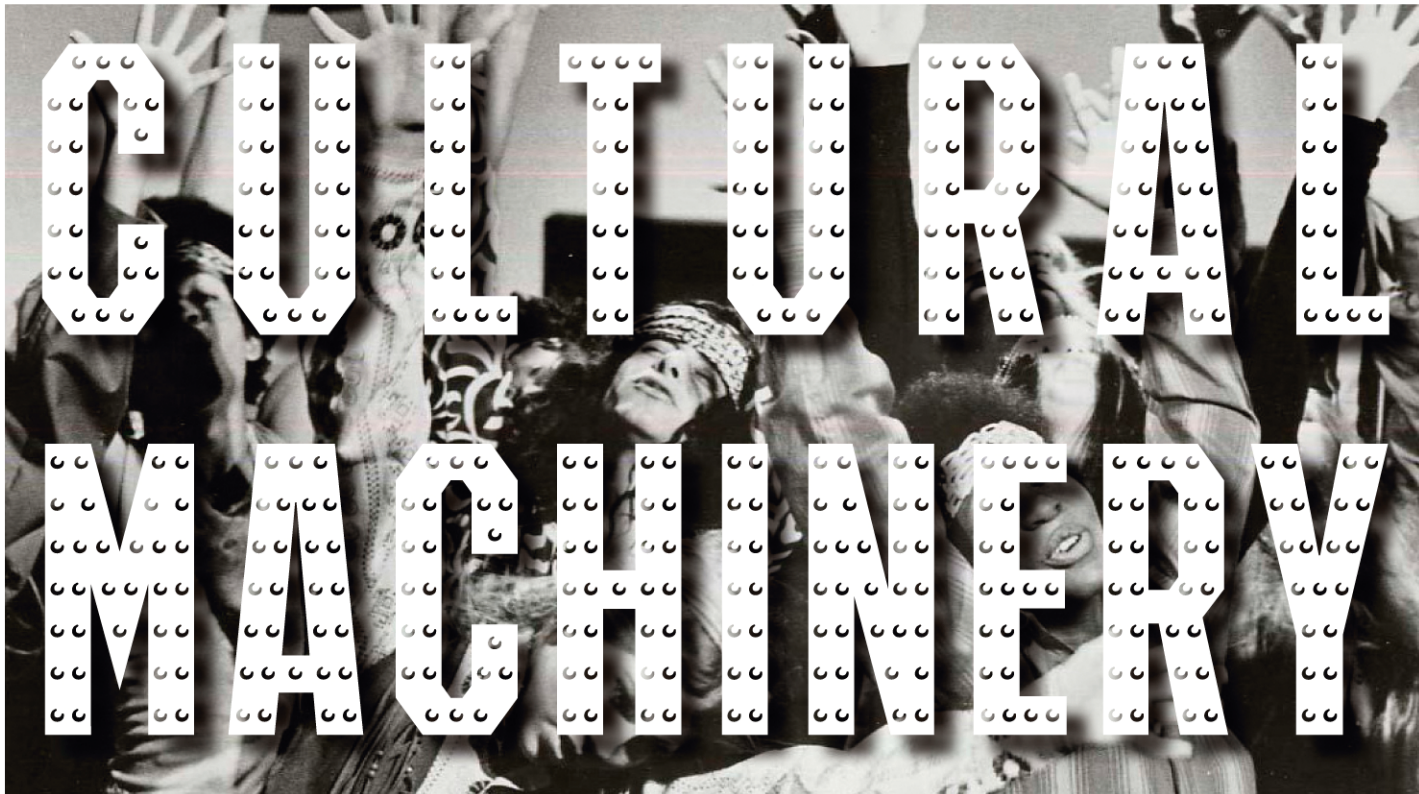
### Segmented line by TOMA

Please allow the generalization and imprecision: a possible line of development of a gentrification process could be as follows: decay (planned or not), displacement of the original inhabitants and replacement for a new "creative class", alteration of the urban landscape and revaluation through culture, reconsideration from real estate investors and, finally, its absorption. Throughout these stages, there's a risk of losing sense of place and collective memory: the new inhabitants feel attracted to a history they cannot make their own, and their presence ends up re-shaping the territory. When these new conditions and appearances begin to demonstrate economic value, the neighborhood inevitably transforms into a consumerist, transactional space, whereby it loses all authenticity. The existing aesthetics of the neighborhood are subsequently subdued to the logics of market, which absorb any possibility of subversion

Only change is permanent, say the most hackneyed and true proverbs. It is easy to make mistakes when trying to understand urban processes; complexities are almost infinite. For that reason, when trying to define the phenomena of gentrification, one must avoid tracing thick lines, or elaborating rash judgements. Blaming a bunch of tattooed-bearded men with glasses or a few malicious millionaires is nothing but simplifying a much more profound situation, and won't make any contribution on its comprehension.

Many of the artists, architects, designers and collectives related to culture that live and/or work in incipient gentrifying districts may have anti-gentrifying discourses and manifest against real estate speculation. At the same time, they may lease offices, shops or ateliers to these same real estate agents, who masquerade as innovation centers, cultural creation hubs or art galleries. In this contradictory way, they make their contribution on the displacement of the original communities.

We must attentively observe these processes from our own critic spot, for we are all actors, victims and victimizers.



## ENTREPRENEURS

"THIS IS NOT A REAL ESTATE BUSINESS"

Said Alejandra Mustakis founder of IF, company dedicated to cultural management and investment in Factoria Italia.



## NY LOFT

Extract from the book "La Buena Vida" of Inaki Abalos

The Loft is a factory, which may be habitable. Warhol makes it a livable place, an Open House, a common place for work and leisure. The "Loft" can be a home studio of large surface and volume, of low rent, in an industrial zone or warehouse from the late 19th century, in an economically depressed central area of the city. It tends to be occupied by one or more persons, depending on their interests. The resulting space is where the inhabitant denies the positive ways of living, to shift to the commercial and industrial space of modernity. It presents itself as a messy space, giving rise to different ways of living. Their schedules are not set out, having its longer life when the city sleeps either at work or at parties. Here, there is the improvisation of each individual. Warhol work with waste products, leftovers, like the loft, which is a leftover, a recycling of what in the past had another use. This translates into the mechanical artistic objet-trouv . The "Loft" mixes recycled works of different kinds, disparate and contradictory objects, which give rise to



considerable heterogeneity. The relationship of the loft with nature is zero. Warhol says that countryside is intended to rest and the city to work, and he likes more work... Warhol's way of inhabiting sustains the different needs of living of each individual.

## THE FACTORY



## THE GENTRIFICATION FACTORY

### IMMIGRANTS



1900  
INDUSTRIAL  
DEVELOPMENT

### HIPSTER CULTURE



2010  
SELF-MANAGEMENT

The Gentrification Factory, is an old infrastructure that portrays current transformation of the old national industry boom, which eventually succumb to the opening of the economic barriers to imports after economic liberalization in the eighties. It is a building that reveals the various strategies of the cultural model of recent decades for reuse and re-conversion of disused spaces. Tensions between independent managers, the institutionalization of alternative practices, the cultural impact on the processes of transformation of the neighborhoods and the displacement of people by gentrifying processes of the neoliberal market.

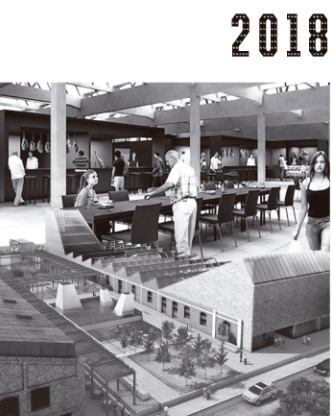
### SPECULATIVE PROCESS



2015  
CULTURAL INDUSTRY

## THE ARCHIVE

### INSTITUTIONALIZATION RECONVERSION



2018

Extract from the essay:

### EMERGING RETAIL GENTRIFICATION IN SANTIAGO DE CHILE: THE CASE OF ITALIA- CAUPOLIC N

Chile is enjoying sustained economic growth accompanied by a boisterous real estate market transforming its capital, Santiago. De Mattos (1999) states that this is the product of a strategy of economic liberalization, which has been in operation since the 1970s.

These operations are taking place within an existing urban social context which is characterized by inequality and spatial segregation. Our case study is the neighbourhood of Italia-Caupolic n in central Santiago where there is strong evidence of conflict between the long established land users, the residential inhabitants and tradespeople (who satisfy local everyday needs), and the new entrepreneurs who are focused on innovating consumerism

(and who aim to captivate a floating elite population). The circumstances of a change in landscape brought about by reinvestment in both the tangible and intangible cultural attributes of the neighbourhood is important to gentrification debates in Chile and serves as a warning of a powerful business model which could potentially be rolled out in other similar neighbourhoods in Santiago.

However, the outcomes of this development are not shared by all the inhabitants of Santiago and there is concern about the (re) production of severe social segregation and urban inequality

While some Chilean authors use the term 'gentrification' in their analysis of urban transformations considering the economic causes of the phenomenon and outline social upgrading as an important aspect, others study the relationship between gentrification processes and the planned decline of neighbourhoods as a pattern of class appropriation of land to the detriment of

those on lower incomes in the city

Holm (2010) also reflects on displacement in central areas, where gentrification has been driven by the cultural capital of creative groups. His analysis comes from the perspective of 'culture capital as instrument of displacement' and he argues that cultural and creative activities have socio cultural effects over the existing population because of a displacement by 'distinction'.

Understanding the decisive role planning legislation plays in shaping commercial activities in the neighbourhood provides insight into the failures of pro-entrepreneurial, neoliberal urbanism where these regulations are absent. Here owners might also be vulnerable (as tenants are) depending on their respectively role as residents or shopkeepers in the neighbourhood. Due to the specific characteristics of commercial activity in the neighbourhood we presume that the rising rents influence at first instance the tenant seller but through him, also indirectly influence the consumer. As

Zukin (2009) stated, displacement in the context of commercial gentrification should then consider the displacement of potential consumer that is forced to buy more expensive and more sophisticated products that respond to the environment that rise in distinction.

Gentrification in Italia-Caupolic n is a different variant from other processes of private developer led gentrification in Santiago. Gentrification here is not the product of a coherent and planned strategy of urban renewal as witnessed in inner city Santiago but is an opportunistic exploitation by private developers of a number of key neighbourhood factors which are transformed into capital gain and which in the absence of state intervention has left local communities vulnerable to private initiatives. This is an emerging process that has not yet reached 'completion' in the sense that 'corporate' interests have not yet arrived en mass to capitalise on this process.

Elke Schlack and Neil Turnbull

## SINCE 1950 IN PILSEN, CHICAGO...



## PILSEN COMMUNITY FIGHT GENTRIFICATION WITH MURALS

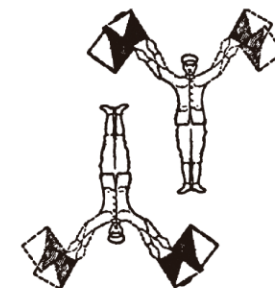
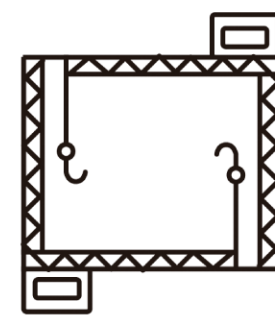
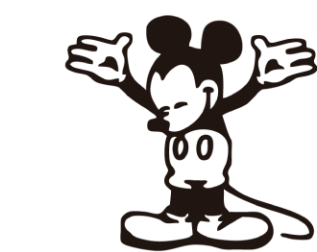
Pilsen is a predominantly Mexican neighborhood on Chicago's Southwest Side, covering the area from the Chicago River north to 16th Street, and the Chicago River west to Damen Avenue. This neighborhood is the recent target of new building construction and refurbished service industries. Since 1997, when the Pilsen TIF (tax increment financing) was approved by the Daley administration, rental and property taxes increased, making it less and less affordable for the Mexican community. With the community being pushed out, Mexican restaurants, coffee shops and stores are losing business as their customers relocate.

The demographics of the neighborhood are quickly changing as increasing rent and higher taxes are driving out community members. With

the pink line at 18th Street running directly through Pilsen, it's convenience to the city's center makes it appealing.

According to the Chicago Tribune, white students are renting many of those apartments: "A 650 square foot loft is being rented for over \$1,200 a month. No one I know can afford that. It is sad to think that I might have to move soon, especially when I don't know where my family and I would go," Andres Perez, a Mexican immigrant who has been living in Pilsen for 34 years, said. Pilsen was named a hotspot for gang violence in 2002 by the Justice Information Authority, but Castillo, as well as many other Pilsen residents, never viewed gangs as a threat. "Sure, like every place in this world there were problems. There were gangs, but I never had any problems with that. I would just see them," Perez said. This is a matter of pride of place, identity and ownership.

Olivia Mohseni



#speculativetribune

## REAL ESTATE VISION

With a passion for infill development, urban planning, quality of life issues, and sensitive design, John Podmajersky III holds a vision for the neighborhood. He sees an outstanding pedestrian community, with the charm of the old world and the excitement made possible by a vibrant multicultural city like Chicago.



**PODMAJERSKY**  
Innovation In Real Estate

SEARCHING FOR MILTON FRIEDMAN  
Day #10: On our visit to Pilsen, we saw many bald men with glasses. Their optical artifacts frames were too thick, more similar to Alende's than Friedman's. It's another day with no findings.



## ABOUT SPECULATIVE TRIBUNE

This periodic newspaper is part of the project ESPECULOPOLIS, developed by TOMA within the context of the Chicago Architecture Biennial between October 3, 2015 and 3 January 2016.

This publication, as every action that takes place in ESPECULOPOLIS, is "Searching for the traces of the urban neoliberalism" and "Speculating about possible post neoliberal urban scenarios".

The editorial process is cumulative and collective. It works independently, as a critical instrument to the context in which it is inserted. The newspaper is a platform of collective reflection.

Each section of the newspaper is open to be produced by any interested person. These contributions can be made in person in Expo 72, 72 E. Randolph St. or through our email to grupotoma@gmail.com

This publication is distributed for free. Printed editions are available and will be distributed in different locations of Chicago. At the time, the issues will be freely available online through various media.